

Several news outlets highlighted the [House Oversight Committee hearing](#) to examine the "Restroom Gender Parity in Federal Buildings Act" or "Potty Parity" bill introduced by Chairman Edolphus Towns.

In the [Washington Post](#), Joe Davidson wrote:

Vivian Y. Bright likes to watch her congressman at work, but she was glad when Rep. Edolphus Towns finally gaveled to a close a hearing on sexual disparity in federal restrooms -- because she had to find one. "Just now, we experienced it," she said. "We went to the ladies room. There's a line."

The House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, which Towns (D-N.Y.) chairs, heard testimony Wednesday on legislation to develop a more equitable sexual balance in the number of toilets in federal buildings.

Nicknamed the Potty Parity Act, the Towns bill would require the number of toilets available for women to equal or exceed the number of toilets and urinals in men's restrooms. The requirement would apply to future federal building construction and to properties undergoing major renovations.

Although potty parity can easily turn into sophomoric humor, it's really a serious matter...

Kathryn H. Anthony, an architecture professor at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, said being forced to wait in line for restrooms is a form of gender bias. Having too few female facilities reflects male dominance. The buildings were designed and built by men apparently indifferent to the additional needs of women, she said.

Fox 5 in Washington, D.C. also reported on the hearing:

Dawn Lim at [Government Executive](#) reported on the "Lawmakers Push for Potty Parity":

Lawmakers can't hold it any longer. They're pushing for potty parity again in the federal workplace.

House Oversight and Government Reform Committee members expressed support during a May 12 hearing for the 2010 Restroom Gender Parity in Federal Building Act (H.R. 4869), which would require new or renovated federal buildings to have an equal number of restroom facilities for both sexes.

"Public restrooms have been the site of institutional discrimination by race, physical ability and gender," said Rep. Edolphus Towns, D-N.Y., committee chairman and the bill's main sponsor. Towns added, "Women are often forced to wait in long lines to use public restrooms, [while] men rarely have the same problem."

"He blamed this on the fact that public buildings were built "before women had entered the workforce in large numbers, [during] a time when contractors, architects, engineers, builders and government procurement officials, were overwhelmingly male, and rarely considered the needs of women."